United Nations

Committee of Experts on Public Administration

Report on the eleventh session (16-20 April 2012)

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Note

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Summary

The present report contains the conclusions and recommendations of the eleventh session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration, held at United Nations Headquarters from 16 to 20 April 2012. The Committee, which was established by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2001/45, consists of 24 experts appointed in their personal capacity for a four-year period. The Committee dealt with the following substantive items: (a) local public governance and administration for results, including (i) intergovernmental governance and regimes, (ii) public service capacity-building for local-level development and (iii) transparency, accountability and citizens' engagement; and (b) review of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance, a discussion on the post-2015 development agenda and other emerging issues related to public governance.

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Chapter I

Draft resolution recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council

The Committee of Experts on Public Administration recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Report of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration on its eleventh session

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolutions 2002/40 of 19 December 2002, 2003/60 of 25 July 2003, 2005/3 of 31 March 2005, 2005/55 of 21 October 2005, 2006/47 of 28 July 2006, 2007/38 of 4 October 2007, 2008/32 of 25 July 2008, 2009/18 of 29 July 2009, 2011/2 of 26 April 2011 and 2011/22 of 27 July 2011, all on public administration and development,

Referring to General Assembly resolutions 50/225 of 19 April 1996, 56/213 of 21 December 2001, 57/277 of 20 December 2002, 58/231 of 23 December 2003, 59/55 of 2 December 2004 and 60/34 of 30 November 2005 on public administration and development, and resolutions 63/202 of 19 December 2008, 64/187 of 4 December 2009, 65/141 of 2 February 2011 and 66/437 of 13 December 2011 on information and communication technologies for development,

Recognizing the work of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration in providing policy advice and programmatic guidance to the Economic and Social Council on issues related to governance and public administration in development,

Taking note of the support being provided by the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance to countries on institutional and human resource capacity development, electronic and mobile government and citizens' engagement in managing development programmes,

Underscoring the centrality of transparent, accountable, inclusive, efficient, effective and equitable public administration in the process of development,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the conclusions of the report of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration on its eleventh session, on local public governance and administration for results;[1]

2. *Welcomes* the recommendations of the Committee to put special emphasis on the role of citizens' engagement, human capital development, including training and education of public servants, and fair allocation of resources in strengthening governance at all levels, particularly the local level;

3. *Reaffirms* that "good governance and the rule of law at the national and international levels are essential for sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and hunger",[2] and

[1] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2012, Supplement No. 24* (E/2012/44).

[2] General Assembly resolution 65/1, para. 11. Other clauses related to citizens' engagement can be found in paragraphs 23 (a), 23 (e) and 23 (g) of the resolution.

encourages Member States to continue to support capacity development in public governance and institution-building at all levels with a view to accelerating progress towards the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

4. *Invites* the Committee of Experts on Public Administration to study the effect of specific practices in responsive and inclusive public governance on development, bearing in mind the need to promote high standards of public sector integrity, transparency, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness at national and local levels, promote equal access to public services and provide opportunities for all people to participate in the conduct of public affairs, and requests the Committee to convey the outcome of the study to the Council through the report on its twelfth session, to be held in April 2013, with a view to assisting the process of preparing for deliberations on a post-2015 development agenda;

5. *Requests* the Secretariat to continue:

(a) To increase the scope and depth of its online and offline capacity development training and to further develop the United Nations Public Administration Country Studies, which contain country statistical data and analytical and case studies, with the aim of better assisting countries in redefining, reforming, strengthening and renewing their public administrations in general, and public service delivery in particular, according to their needs;

(b) To give due recognition to innovative public sector initiatives by Member States through the promotion and strengthening of the United Nations Public Service Day and the United Nations Public Service Awards;

(c) To support the development of the United Nations Public Administration Network for partnership-building, knowledge dissemination and the exchange of best practices and lessons learned in the area of public administration;

(d) To assist the implementation of the Geneva Plan of Action adopted by the World Summit on the Information Society at its first phase, held in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003,[3] on issues related to electronic and mobile government;

6. *Requests* the Committee to invite Member States to contribute to the trust funds of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat for financing its programmes and outreach activities.

[3] See A/C.2/59/3, annex, chap. I.

Chapter II
Organization of the session

A. Duration of the session

1. The Committee of Experts on Public Administration, established by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2001/45, consists of 24 experts appointed in their personal capacity by the Council upon the nomination of the Secretary-General. The Committee held its eleventh session at United Nations Headquarters from 16 to 20 April 2012.

B. Attendance

2. The session was attended by 23 Committee members. Observers from organizations of the United Nations system and from intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations also attended.

3. The session was attended by the following Committee members: Luis F. Aguilar Villanueva (Mexico), Rowena Bethel (Bahamas), Vitoria Dias Diogo (Mozambique), Mikhail Dmitriev (Russian Federation), Meredith Edwards (Australia), Walter Fust (Switzerland), Bin Hao (China), Mushtaq Khan (Bangladesh), Pan Suk Kim (Republic of Korea), Francisco Longo Martinez (Spain), Hyam Nashash (Jordan), Joseph Dion Ngute (Cameroon), Peter Anyang' Nyong'o (Kenya), Marta Oyhanarte (Argentina), Odette Ramsingh (South Africa), Siripurapu Kesava Rao (India), Margaret Saner (United Kingdom), Valeria Termini (Italy), Gwendoline Williams (Trinidad and Tobago), Susan L. Woodward (United States of America), Philip Yeo (Singapore), Najat Zarrouk (Morocco) and Jan Ziekow (Germany).

4. Owing to administrative responsibilities, Paul Oquist (Nicaragua) could not attend the session.

5. The list of observers who attended the session can be viewed on the website of the United Nations Public Administration Network at www.unpan.org/cepa.

C. Agenda

6. The agenda of the Committee for its eleventh session was as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Local public governance and administration for results:
   (a) Intergovernmental governance and regimes;
   (b) Public service capacity-building for local-level development;
   (c) Transparency, accountability and citizens' engagement.
4. Review of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance and a discussion on the post-2015 development agenda and other emerging issues related to public governance.

5. Proposed programme of work and agenda for the twelfth session of the Committee.

D. Election of officers

7. The following members served as Committee officers during the eleventh session:

Chair:
Najat Zarrouk (Morocco)

Vice-Chairs:
Pan Suk Kim (Republic of Korea)
Marta Oyhanarte (Argentina)
Margaret Saner (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Rapporteur:
Mikhail Dmitriev (Russian Federation)

Chapter III
Summary of proceedings and conclusions

A. Work of the Committee

8. At the opening session, the Chair, Najat Zarrouk, welcomed the experts and introduced the main theme of the session: local public governance and administration for results. The Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, Jomo Kwame Sundaram, gave an introductory speech on behalf of the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Sha Zukang, in which he underlined the significance of local governance in sustainable development, particularly through cooperation, public-private partnerships, citizens' engagement and the adequate use of information and communications technologies. The Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council, Luis Alfonso de Alba, gave an introductory speech in which he associated local governance and development with the Council's annual ministerial review theme of employment creation and productivity. Both speakers urged the Committee members to provide concrete advice to the Council and the Secretariat on the aforementioned linkages towards the realization of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, and beyond, particularly with regard to the formulation of the post-2015 development agenda.

9. A brief organizational statement by the Director of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, concluded the opening session. The statement covered the publications of the Division, including those pertaining to the previous and the current session of the Committee, and other logistical matters pertaining to the agenda of the eleventh session.

B. Local public governance and administration for results

Intergovernmental governance and regimes

10. This session, chaired by Marta Oyhanarte, included presentations of papers by Jan Ziekow (E/C.16/2012/2) and Bin Hao and a presentation by the Secretary-General of the Africa chapter of United Cities and Local Governments, Jean-Pierre Elong Mbassi. Mr. Ziekow linked representative democracy with results-based and citizen-centred local governance and stressed five elements that make the linkage effective: (a) local and financial autonomy; (b) balance between district size and values of representation; (c) electoral rules and governance procedures for local governments and representatives; (d) dual responsibility of members of local councils towards the administration and citizens; and (e) a healthy relationship between local and national governance in terms of division of authority and resources. He concluded that, in the absence of effective local public administration and management, local partnerships and forms of cooperation between local governments, civil society and the private sector could become dysfunctional, hence the importance of the creation of arenas of information based on free access to information, communication, negotiation, reciprocity and mutual evaluation. He also stressed that free and fair elections were a necessary but an insufficient condition of healthy representative democracies. Other important elements included participatory instruments, additional legitimization designs and tools and vertical

and horizontal mechanisms of organizational cooperation with multiple governance actors, including, in particular, civil society at the local level.

11. Mr. Bin Hao delineated some of the main characteristics of federal and unitary systems in general, explaining how any given system could contain elements of both in varying degrees. He also gave details about the Chinese system of administration and its three phases of restructuring with regard to tax sharing, policy on the banking system, industrial and commercial administration and quality and technical supervision, from 1978 until the present day. He particularly emphasized the pilot cases of Shanghai Pudong New Area and Tianjin Binhai New Area as examples of the efforts of the Government of China to improve central and local relations in administrative and economic spheres. He stressed three factors that had contributed to the progress made in China: (a) unity and solidarity in terms of cooperation between central and local governments, (b) balance between economic development and social stability and (c) socialist democracy and rule of law.

12. Mr. Elong Mbassi linked local governance directly with the current global challenges, including poverty, environmental degradation, hunger and others related to lack of progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Stressing that efforts to achieve the goals could only be successful to the extent that they included the local developmental stakeholders, he voiced the interest of United Cities and Local Governments in cooperating with the Committee of Experts on Public Administration and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in particular with regard to United Cities' African Academy on Local Governance project, which aimed to respond to the capacity needs of local governments in Africa. Mr. Elong Mbassi also referred to possible cooperation between the Committee, given its wealth of knowledge on public administration, and United Cities' publication, *The Global Observatory on Local Democracy and Decentralisation*, and its "Summit of African Local Governments: Africities Summit", to be held in Dakar from 4 to 8 December 2012.

13. The discussions, led by Francisco Longo Martinez, centred on the attributes of the new paradigm of multilevel governance and the place of public administration in it. Mr. Longo Martinez described the paradigm in terms of an amalgam of characteristics borrowed from four eras of development, namely (a) the creation of a nation-State and the associated emphasis on legal-jurisdictional boundaries, (b) the creation of a welfare State and the associated emphasis on public actors of governance, (c) the incorporation of private and social sectors in governance, with an emphasis on the framework of market economies and (d) network governance with its shift in focus from competition to collaboration. He referred to certain capabilities that might be necessary for multilevel governance to function properly, including (a) rational designs for allocating powers among federal and local governments, (b) extension of the principle of subsidiarity, (c) transparent communication channels based on collective decision-making consensus-building and (d) rule-based accountability and a system of weights and counterweights, including professional codes of conduct, among other things. Other elements to improve effective and democratic multilevel governance involved the creation of clear and effective fiscal and financial incentive mechanisms; skills development with an emphasis on human capital, social leadership and public-private cooperation modes; and continuous learning, focusing particularly on negotiation, participation and evaluation.

14. The discussions then turned to ways in which local governance for developmental results could be strengthened at a general level. Speakers emphasized the importance of:

(a) Recognizing the specific political histories and contexts for decentralization and looking for innovative ways to address the importance of local autonomy, such as associations of local governments;

(b) Revitalizing the efforts to arrest the declining trend of decentralization and local governance, including through demonstrating how central governments can be strengthened — not weakened — through decentralization;

(c) Balancing the authority and responsibilities of local governments with those of other levels of government, governance actors and local traditional authorities;

(d) Having a capable central government that can allocate resources efficiently and effectively and ensure equal opportunities for local authorities;

(e) Addressing the particular challenges of inclusive public administration in big cities.

15. The discussions also covered ways in which local governance for developmental results could be strengthened at more specific levels. Emphasis was placed on:

(a) Improving fiscal autonomy with due regard to administrative and political capacity development;

(b) Accommodating fiscal arrangements of countries to different developmental stages and needs;

(c) Focusing on local governance as a catalyst of both democratic governance and economic development;

(d) Educating citizens and public servants on local representation;

(e) Taking the necessary measures to prevent the process from being captured by vested interests;

(f) Duly involving, where appropriate, traditional authorities in formal discussions and policymaking;

(g) Introducing effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Public service capacity-building for local-level development

16. This session, chaired by Pan Suk Kim, began with presentations of papers by Philip Yeo (E/C.16/2012/3) and Najat Zarrouk.

17. Mr. Yeo outlined the key principles of governance for the establishment of a strong public administration in Singapore: (a) adopting pragmatism towards group freedoms with an eye on social harmony, and the mixed use of market and State-led approaches in economic and industrial policymaking; (b) avoiding a culture of dependency through public policies that encourage multi-stakeholder saving schemes funded by employee wages and employer contributions; (c) evaluating the purpose of policy and the relevance of institutions on a regular basis; (d) embracing a holistic approach to government and promoting inter-agency coordination and cooperation; (e) promoting honesty, transparency and intolerance for corruption and

reducing incentives for corrupt behaviour; and (e) emphasizing human capital development through a focus on meritocracy and continuous learning.

18. The main challenges for the establishment of a strong public administration in Singapore included: (a) dealing effectively with the rising economic inequalities through policy; (b) ensuring effective and harmonious co-governance, which includes the social and the private sectors in complex environments for common purposes; (c) meaningfully engaging citizens while striking the right balance between security and transparency; (d) responding to the growing complexity of societal needs and demands; and (e) addressing the longer-term trade-offs in welfare policy.

19. Ms. Zarrouk, viewing local governments and governance actors as major developmental players, probed the three main challenges they face amid the complexities and uncertainties presented by globalization: (a) the relations between the State and local collectivities, especially how competencies and resources are shared as well as the mechanisms of regulation, control and support; (b) democracy, organization and public governance at the local level; and (c) the impact of local public governance on citizens' well-being, on the fight against poverty and on local development. Noting that tenets of local governance could be drawn from the precepts of Islam, Moroccan culture and traditions, the Moroccan administration and the new Constitution of Morocco, she pointed to the need to better coordinate the decentralization processes and initiatives through a consistent and comprehensive strategy with a clear division of responsibilities and competencies among all the concerned actors and institutions, based on the principle of subsidiarity and local autonomy. She showed how capacity development undertaken within a holistic and strategic framework could impact development at the national, regional and local levels. Presenting an informative overview of the development of local governance in Morocco, she enumerated four priority areas in which capacity development could support effective and democratic local public administration and management: (a) strong and effective leadership; (b) strategic management and fiscal management; (c) quality public services; and (d) genuine citizen participation.

20. The Director of the Democratic Governance Group of the Bureau for Development Policy of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, gave a presentation entitled "Every development is local". She enumerated five building blocks for sustainable local-level development: (a) effective economic governance, (b) targeted local development based, inter alia, on effective infrastructure and social amenities, (c) ease of enterprise and entrepreneurship development, (d) focused skill development and (e) the proliferation of alternative and varied livelihood opportunities. Ms. Fraser-Moleketi also probed the elements that are necessary for effective public service delivery, namely (a) an appropriate institutional structure; (b) well-defined roles and responsibilities; (c) a clear system of procedures, regulations and coordination to facilitate local-level development; (d) development of human capacity, skills, knowledge and competencies; and (e) explicit accountability systems and an appropriate local discretionary budget.

21. Ms. Fraser-Moleketi recommended the following options in order to build the capacity of the public service in responding to its primary responsibility of facilitating local-level development: (a) relevant and adaptive systems of public service; (b) coherence between institutions and responsibilities, responsibilities and results, and results and assigned expenditures or funds; (c) regular measures of assessing a public service delivery system so as to make the procedures and

regulations more responsive to local-level development; (d) incentive systems including working conditions, remuneration and promotion to facilitate development initiatives; (e) adequate financing of public service and resources for development plans; and (f) innovative means for public service delivery.

22. The discussions, led by Valeria Termini and Susan Woodward, reiterated the role that local government can play in bringing government closer to the people and fostering citizens' engagement, minorities' voices, poverty reduction, human development, the provision of basic services and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, provided that the differences in historical, social, economic and political context across countries, regions, localities and communities are taken into account. It was pointed out that the conditions supporting effective public administration in wealthy, stable countries such as Singapore and Morocco differ from those in aid-dependent, fragile and conflict-affected States. The discussion, focusing on trust, institutions of accountability and efforts to integrate policies and services among levels of government, brought to the fore a host of challenges:

(a) Human capital and skills development for effective local governance, with a focus on public values and responsible citizenship, beginning with primary education and including cooperation with universities and training institutions to attract talent into the public sector and train public servants to meet the challenges of increasing uncertainty and global risks; merit-based recruitment and promotion in public administration; and measures to retain the best talent in local public service;

(b) A pragmatic approach balancing measures for the promotion of both economic growth with social integration and inclusiveness;

(c) Genuine cooperation and collaboration among governance actors spearheaded by Governments, as opposed to unilateral decentralization or devolution, which is sometimes seen as a panacea for effective local governance;

(d) Local autonomy, that is, the empowerment of local governments and their capacity to exercise their new functions based on a fair distribution of resources (e.g., in rural areas);

(e) Foreign aid to post-conflict countries: its volatility and fragmentation, the focus by bilateral and multilateral donors on technical assistance by highly paid foreign consultants, and means of aid delivery that bypass governments, both central and local, thus undermining rather than building administrative capacity and skills in the public sector;

(f) The need to demonstrate how aid can be just as effective in fragile, conflict-affected States as in others, so as to support those countries' efforts to change donors' wrongly held views about them.

23. In response to the last point, it was stated that bilateral and multilateral donors needed to support State-building in post-conflict countries by facilitating Government initiatives that enhance stability, service delivery and the recognition of human rights. In addition to mainstream support for Governments, there might be a need to strengthen the capacity of non-governmental and civil society organizations that contribute to service delivery at the local level while ensuring accountability. Government processes were thus not bypassed but rather strengthened.

24. On the basis of the Singaporean experience of merit-based public administration and the Moroccan example of the necessity of human capital

development for local governance, and the many experiences of UNDP in facilitating public-service adaptation for local-level development (for example in Nepal, Rwanda, Somalia, Ghana and South Africa), two conclusions were drawn: first, that local governance has played an important role in facilitating the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and can serve as a veritable implementation vehicle for the post-2015 development agenda; and second, that citizens' engagement, including the appropriate and innovative use of information and communication strategies, has the power to strengthen local governance by infusing it with transparency, accountability and ownership.

Transparency, accountability and citizens' engagement

25. This session, chaired by Mikhail Dmitriev, included presentations of papers by Marta Oyhanarte (E/C.16/2012/4) and Mushtaq Khan. Ms. Oyhanarte underlined the new challenges arising from myriad factors related to globalization and urged policymakers to move from the conceptual to the operational phase, particularly concerning democratic governance and rights-related policies, and to accord due importance to the role of institutions in putting policies and decisions into practice. She stressed that citizens' engagement, defined as "orderly, concerted action by individuals and organizations, undertaken with the aim to address existing problems and to cooperate with the Government", was one of the best local development management tools, provided that access to information and transparency were the underlying systemic features. In that context, the role of social leadership was to ensure optimal choice among multiple options. She concluded that a new political culture was taking hold at the local level, requiring a new vision of democracy and community that went beyond administrative or jurisdictional boundaries to meet the new demands of globalization while contributing to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals.

26. Mr. Khan posited the puzzle that the last decade of anti-corruption initiatives had produced very limited success in the developing world. It was thus important to differentiate between specific types of corruption as opposed to using general and aggregate measures of corruption. He underlined two characteristics distinguishing the developing from the developed countries: (a) entrenched political corruption originating from a number of structural causes and (b) a low level of overall institutionalization, including inadequate enforcement of property rights.

27. Regarding the first characteristic, he pointed to one necessary, albeit insufficient, long-term solution: promoting the growth of the taxpaying capabilities of a broad-based productive economy, which could increase the fiscal base for the adoption of social democratic policies by political parties, and thus foster a progressive shift from off-budget informal activities to on-budget formal interactions. Regarding the second characteristic, the long-term solution was to gradually increase the capacity of the State to enforce property rights and contracts, which could in time culminate in a broadly legitimate structure of rights and institutions. He concluded that anti-corruption strategies that focused on the individual incentives of public servants, such as higher salaries, more transparency and accountability, or less red tape, might not always be effective in developing-world settings where feedback mechanisms between the productive and the political sectors were either weak or non-existent, and public officials operated in contexts of significant informality in the political and productive sectors. All variants of corruption could be found in most countries, but developing countries differed in terms of the mix,

which explained the different developmental outcomes across countries. He urged policymakers to make anti-corruption efforts about outcomes and to think in terms of pragmatic solutions whereby corruption could be feasibly controlled with respect to the achievement of specific developmental strategies and targets.

28. The Director of the Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Rolf Alter, made a presentation on the new challenges facing governments amid financial and economic crises. Referring to the obligation of today's governments to lead and deliver, while at the same time deepening their dialogue with citizens, he maintained that despite social, economic and political pressures and the difficulties involved in providing quality public services, public service values such as impartiality, legality, transparency and integrity remained the guiding principles in OECD countries across all levels of government. Strengthening trust with citizens, preserving long-term growth and being more cost-effective, particularly at the subnational level, while enhancing the quality of local public service delivery, were the key challenges today. Fiscal space for investment spending at the local level must also be sustained, particularly for investments in human capital. That required, inter alia, making multi-level governance more effective by sharing good practices and cases of success and failure, and also by developing standards and benchmarks to assess progress and results.

29. The discussion was led by Meredith Edwards, Hyam Nashash and Margaret Saner. There was agreement that citizens now have more avenues to express their views, particularly in relation to service delivery. It was also agreed that governments cannot achieve results on their own, and where services are delivered by non-governmental bodies, those bodies increasingly seek to influence government decision-making, yet are not accountable. Finally, it was noted that the engagement of citizens directly in the policy process is not fully developed, and there remains a risk of citizen cynicism as governments fail to achieve the expected results.

30. Different points of view were expressed regarding the structural and institutional versus the individual-choice determinants of corruption, and the types of anti-corruption mechanisms they entailed. Institutionally, it was noted that corruption could be tackled through changes at the structural-organizational levels. Individually, leadership and political will, as well as education and training, were stressed as factors that could counter corruption, hence the importance of capacity development, particularly of the youth and public servants. The Committee agreed that both approaches were useful and necessary in fighting corruption, particularly with a view to promoting sustainable development. It was further observed that the local level provided the right milieu for taking actionable measures while thinking through the multidimensional issues from a systemic perspective. Such measures might include setting up management systems and processes that meet the aforementioned challenges, attract investment, stimulate knowledge and innovation, develop comparative advantages, promote strategic partnerships with the private and the social sectors and bring local governments into the global context.

31. While the progress so far made in anti-corruption efforts in the developing world was duly recognized, the following areas were proposed for further pragmatic and effective interventions against corruption: (a) open government models with citizens' participation at their core; (b) effective transparency mechanisms and enforcement of the right to information frameworks concerning governments,

institutions, mechanisms and resources; (c) adequate use of information and communications technologies, social media tools, e-government platforms and measures to fight the digital divide; (d) investment in human capital and training on the meaning, appearances and common understanding of corruption and on integrity, accountability and transparency; (e) connected governance, particularly at the local level; (f) accountability strategies in an environment of joined-up services; (g) the role of civil society actors, particularly women and youth, and investigative media; (h) the important role of independent supreme audit institutions as the allies of citizens and cooperation with international institutions such as the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions to facilitate transparency and accountability. It was also proposed to value preventive measures against corruption as much as criminal sanctions. It was concluded that in the globalized world, the fight against corruption was no longer solely a national issue, and thus should be the object of concerted international action.

Conclusions and recommendations on local public governance and administration for results

Intergovernmental governance and regimes

32. The Committee stressed the need to ensure fair sharing and allocation of responsibilities and resources between national and local levels, among the local governments themselves and among all the stakeholders.

33. The Committee highlighted the urgency of investing local authorities with sufficient power to exercise their increased functions.

34. The Committee underscored that the concerns of citizens, including women, the elderly, youth and the disabled, must be included adequately at the local level. Some of the measures to ensure that these concerns are addressed could include equal opportunities, institutions that ensure citizens' participation, education to ensure citizens' full representation and participation and public platforms for sharing information and receiving public views.

35. While there is a need to consider all three dimensions — political, administrative and fiscal — for local governments to effectively exercise their authority for development, the Committee recommended that measures be implemented to tackle the glaring gap in fiscal decentralization and focus on local fiscal autonomy, particularly in developing countries.

Public service capacity-building for local-level development

36. The Committee reiterated that local governance must be discussed in the historical and political context, and that decentralization without sufficient resources, adequate capacity and accountability would not achieve its objectives.

37. The Committee emphasized the important role of local governments in development and the need for adequate capacity-building and development at the local level, bearing in mind the current challenges of rising informality in political and economic processes, inequality and unemployment as well as the increasing information flow among citizens through the use of information and communications technologies, which in turn results in higher demand for accountability.

38. The Committee concluded that in order for local governments to provide quality public services, several forms of public-private-people partnerships, as well as inter-agency cooperation, should receive due focus. Such partnerships and collaboration should not interfere with the workings of free markets, and should be in line with democratic representation. Cooperation among local governments is highly encouraged for knowledge, dissemination and experience-sharing, along with the benefits of economies of scale.

Transparency, accountability and citizens' engagement

39. The Committee concluded that the new global context was such that a diverse environment of multi-stakeholder governance actors made the role of local governments and governance at all levels more important.

40. It emphasized that there was a need, particularly in many developing countries, for clear responsibilities and corresponding resource allocations, as well as the application of adequate technologies and innovations, to enable local development in the framework of multi-level governance.

41. It also stressed the importance of training and education of public servants, human capital development and merit-based public administration, particularly at the local level, to reduce inequalities.

42. The Committee put special emphasis on the role of citizens' engagement in strengthening governance at all levels, particularly at the local level. In so doing, it highlighted the need to pay attention to encouraging effective social leadership and institutionalization of citizens' engagement in governance in general and in policy processes more specifically, and the important role of citizens in closing accountability gaps. The Committee also underlined the importance of (a) the proper use of information and communications technologies for improving transparency, (b) the engagement modalities preferred by specific sectors of the population and (c) consideration of differences in the institutionalization and organization of citizens' participation across countries.

43. It recommended international cooperation on anti-corruption issues and citizens' engagement for developmental outcomes in public sector and governance, and cooperation between the Committee of Experts on Public Administration and relevant counterparts within and outside the United Nations system.

44. The Committee also outlined some challenges regarding the efforts to increase the role of citizens' engagement in local public governance, including increasing cynicism and declining trust, and the lack of institutional frameworks that align citizen-generated issues between the national and local governments.

C. Review of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance

45. The Secretariat presented a note (E/C.16/2012/5) highlighting the major activities it undertook in 2011.

46. This session, chaired by Valeria Termini, included a presentation by the Director of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management on the major activities and results achieved by the Division in 2011. Those activities

and achievements included the following: (a) the United Nations Public Service Awards, which were to be held in 2012 at United Nations Headquarters in New York on the basis of 471 nominations, representing a 58 per cent increase from 2011; (b) the United Nations Public Administration Network had maintained its status as one of the most visited websites of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in 2011, its content downloads increasing by 18.4 per cent and page views by 4.8 per cent in comparison to the 2010 levels; (c) the *United Nations e-Government Survey 2012: e-Government for the People* had been successfully launched in March 2012; (d) the Division had provided advisory services to 25 countries all over the world; (e) the United Nations Public Administration Country Studies continued to be developed and would be maintained as a comprehensive, up-to-date and readily accessible online knowledge base of all 193 Member States on public governance and administration.

47. The note by the Secretariat also proposed the strategic framework for the period 2014-2015, with three major functional areas: (a) institutional and human resources development in the public sector; (b) e-government development; and (c) development management and citizens' engagement. The note also invited the Committee to review and provide feedback to the Secretariat on its activities intended to assist national and local governments in addressing their public governance and administration-related challenges as well as the emerging issues in a globalized world. Finally, it highlighted the activities undertaken by the Secretariat to streamline its operations towards results-based and demand-driven approaches, with particular focus on the effective use of information and communications technologies and knowledge acquisition and management for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Conclusions and recommendations of the Committee

48. The Committee members congratulated the Secretariat for major achievements and progress made with limited resources; urged the Secretariat to seek the feedback of Member States on the activities presented by the Director of the Division; and requested increased cooperation with the Division in research, capacity development and training activities, including those relating to e-government in public management, and anti-corruption activities in public governance and development management.

49. The branding of the United Nations Public Service Awards and the linkages with the permanent missions in that regard, as well as outreach strategies in general, were emphasized for the Secretariat to take into consideration. The Director of the Division welcomed the requests for collaboration within the framework of the mandate of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance and reiterated the willingness of the Division to work closely with partners within and outside the United Nations system to improve public governance and administration to help achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. She requested the Committee members and observers to assist the Division in raising awareness of its activities, products and services.

D. Briefing on the post-2015 development agenda and other emerging issues related to public governance

50. The Director of the Division briefed the Committee on steps being taken by the United Nations system, at the request of Member States, to initiate brainstorming on steps to advance the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015. The Committee was invited to consider how it might contribute to the global discussion, which was still very exploratory. Speaking on behalf of the Bureau, Margaret Saner noted that the soft approach of declaring principles of good public governance without connecting them to a commitment to monitoring and evaluation of national development goals did not seem to have produced the expected results. She asked if the Committee would envisage a process whereby each country, drawing on evidence-based international standards, established its own national public governance objectives as a means to facilitate the achievement of development goals while also agreeing to take part in an annual review of progress on commitments the country itself would determine.

51. In the discussion that ensued, the Committee stressed above all the vital role of good public governance and sound public administration in improving people's lives and ensuring the well-being of societies. It was agreed that good public governance and sound public management were central to human development, and must be reflected in a post-2015 development agenda. The concept of public governance as defined by the Committee[4] and others was thought to be broad enough to serve as a basis for a global framework relevant to all countries. At the same time, the Committee noted that the post-2015 discussions should focus on specific aspects of high-quality public governance, such as the capacity of public institutions, the quality of interaction between the public and private spheres, the effectiveness of public service delivery and e-governance, in order to be productive and pay attention to other development issues.

52. Because public governance systems are highly contextual, with needs shaped by national and local circumstances, the Committee reflected upon whether local and national agendas should be situated within a larger framework by combining global norms with concrete national objectives. Drawing on the experiences of the Millennium Development Goals, the Committee affirmed that public governance goals must be established and owned by national actors, and a more enabling local environment was needed to build development agendas from the bottom up.

Conclusions and recommendations of the Committee

53. It was concluded that the concept of public governance as defined by the Committee and others is broad enough to serve as a basis for a global framework relevant to all countries. Yet, since the post-2015 discussions should focus on specific aspects of public governance, such as the capacity of public institutions and the quality of interaction between the public and private spheres, with due regard to other developmental issues, the Committee recommended that further study and reflection be undertaken.

[4] See Compendium of basic United Nations terminology in governance and public administration (E/C.16/2008/3) at http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan029283.pdf.

54. It was agreed that public governance systems are contextual, with needs shaped by both national and local circumstances. It was recommended that local and national agendas be situated within a larger framework by combining global norms with concrete national objectives.

55. Drawing on the experience of the Millennium Development Goals, the Committee affirmed that public governance goals must be established and owned by national actors while a more enabling local environment is targeted to build development agendas from the bottom up.

56. The Committee concluded that the lack of citizen participation and of adequate resources are important factors in the lack of progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It recommended that the administrative burden of development assistance be reduced, inter alia, through a more effective alignment of international assessments with national planning schedules.

57. The Committee also recommended undertaking studies on the specific aspects of quality public governance, such as the capacity of public institutions and the quality of interaction between the public and private spheres.

58. The Committee members agreed on the importance of developing a dynamic, tailored approach to enabling the achievement of development goals through effective public governance. It noted the considerable work already done in that regard. It recommended a review and evidence-based analysis of the challenges and successes of achieving development goals in relation to public governance (including the Millennium Development Goals). From that analysis, members would develop proposals for inclusion in their 2013 report on enabling the achievement of national (including local) development goals in a global context.

59. The Committee recommended inviting Member States to contribute to the trust funds of the Division for financing its programmes and outreach activities.

E. Session on innovative ways to enrich collaboration between the Committee and the Division

60. At the eleventh session, the Committee continued the innovation of breaking into working groups defined by the three Branches of the Division. In all three, Committee members sought ways to facilitate more substantive dialogue among members and closer communication with the Secretariat between annual meetings, such as online or through e-mail. The following reports from each working group were presented to Committee members in a plenary session chaired by Margaret Saner.

Working group 1
Public administration capacity: institutional resource development

61. The working group discussed the United Nations Public Service Awards; post-conflict reconstruction in public administration; professionalizing human resource management in the public sector; public administration leadership at the local level; and public administration and poverty reduction.

62. The following recommendations were made by the Committee members to guide the future work of the Public Administration Capacity Branch:

(a) Regarding the United Nations Public Service Awards the Committee should pass a resolution on the provision of resources for this divisional activity. Specifically, one or two full days before the official Committee meeting could be allocated to the task, which would ensure a comprehensive, qualitative and detailed evaluation of the cases, whose number was expected to increase from one year to another. The Division should build on its current trend analysis reporting and conduct a full impact assessment of the Awards for each region and award category, and invite the winners to make a presentation to the Committee at its twelfth session in 2013;

(b) The Division should write to ministers of foreign affairs and public services in each country and provide information about the Committee, its role, activities and accomplishments;

(c) The Division should build on and further its coordination and links within the United Nations system, including at the national level;

(d) The Committee should consider setting standards of excellence in the eight focus areas of the Millennium Development Goals with the aim of creating more effective links between its work and the goals;

(e) The Division should develop standards in public administration regarding the Millennium Development Goals sectors, particularly in specific sectors such as health and education;

(f) The Division should develop a train the trainers programme with regard to the toolkit for the post-conflict reconstruction of public administration;

(g) To strengthen public administration at the local level for the implementation of development agendas, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs should allow access of local governments to the Committee;

(h) The Division should extend human resource capacity-building initiatives to the Caribbean region;

(i) The Division should continue to strengthen its work on the United Nations Public Administration Country Studies.

Working group II
E-government development

63. The working group discussed the United Nations Public Administration Country Studies and e-government development; the United Nations e-government survey and the local dimension in view of the main theme of the Committee's eleventh session; and electronic procurement as a tool to promote transparency, accountability and efficiency and effectiveness in public service delivery.

64. The following recommendations were made by the Committee members to guide the future work of the e-Government Branch:

(a) The Committee should encourage the Division to explore modalities to promote the United Nations e-government survey at local and regional levels and to develop mechanisms for such surveys at the national and regional levels, similar to the UNDP *Human Development Report*, including through partnerships to be developed with the regional institutions of the United Nations system;

(b) The Committee should support the establishment of a special category of United Nations e-government award for efficient service delivery at the local level;

(c) The Committee should support the establishment of e-government regional round tables and strategic local multi-stakeholder partnerships to promote e-government exchanges and cooperation, drawing on the e-government survey and the United Nations Public Administration Country Studies;

(d) The Committee should back the Division in promoting the establishment of national consortia of all stakeholders to strengthen dialogue among governments at various levels, the private sector and civil society to promote results-oriented private-public partnership approaches in e-government development;

(e) Committee members should be consulted to provide substantive contributions to the United Nations Public Administration Country Studies;

(f) The working group strongly supported the development of a knowledge guide product on electronic procurement as a basis to address the potential of utilizing information and communications technologies and e-government to enhance transparency, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in public service delivery.

Working group III
Development management and citizens' engagement

65. The working group discussed advocacy and normative support; research and analysis; knowledge sharing and training; and advisory services in the field.

66. The Committee members recommended the following actions to guide the future work of the Branch:

(a) Investigate mechanisms for engagement that allow for the achievement of development outcomes and, where possible, measure outcomes as a general direction of the work of the Branch;

(b) Analyse relations between the formulation and implementation of national development strategies and appropriate organizations for the engagement and democratic participation of citizens;

(c) Serve as a clearing house on what works in terms of citizens' engagement, including through making use of United Nations Public Service Award cases, evaluating participation schemes in public administration and disseminating the resulting information through the United Nations Public Administration Country Studies;

(d) Analyse citizens' engagement as measured specifically according to gender and relevant categories pertaining to social groups;

(e) Ensure that e-government engagement mechanisms are seen as one of many effective ways to engage citizens, with due focus on who is being engaged and when in the policy process;

(f) Develop toolkits, test them with potential users and conduct outreach for their wide dissemination to maximize their use (African Peer Review Mechanism engagement instruments could be looked at as a reference tool);

(g) Carry out outreach activities targeting other organizations and partnerships;

(h) Continue to engage Committee members, particularly in finalizing outputs;

(i) Follow up and support the initiatives that are established in response to the evolving situation in the Middle East and North Africa region.

F. Proposed programme of work and agenda for the next session of the Committee and preliminary review of the draft report

67. The Committee agreed upon the main theme "The role of responsive and accountable public governance in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda" for its twelfth session. Under the main theme, there will be three sub-themes, namely (a) making public governance work for the post-2015 development agenda; (b) stakeholder accountability in public governance for development; and (c) creating an enabling environment for the post-2015 development agenda. Papers on the themes will be prepared by selected Committee members.

68. The Committee approved the convening of its twelfth session from 15 to 19 April 2013 and approved the following agenda for adoption by the Economic and Social Council:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of agenda and other organizational matters.
3. The role of responsive and accountable public governance in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda:
   (a) Making public governance work for the post-2015 development agenda;
   (b) Stakeholders accountability in public governance for development;
   (c) Creating an enabling environment for the post-2015 development agenda
4. Review of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance.
5. Agenda for the thirteenth session of the Committee of Experts.

69. The Committee adopted the draft report of its eleventh session.

Annex

List of documents

Document symbol	*Agenda item*	*Title or description*
E/C.16/2012/1	2	Provisional agenda and organization of work
E/C.16/2012/2	3 (a)	Report on intergovernmental governance and regimes
E/C.16/2012/3	3 (b)	Report on public service capacity-building for local-level development: the Singapore Public Service — a case study
E/C.16/2012/4	3 (c)	Report on transparency, accountability and citizens' engagement
E/C.16/2012/5	4	Review of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance

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